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10 July 1985

Soviet Active Measures Campaign Against the Jamaica
International Youth Conference: A Case Study (U)

Summary

The Soviet Union conducted an intense, systematic, worldwide active measures campaign against the Western-sponsored International Youth Conference held in Kingston, Jamaica, 6-9 April 1985. Begun in mid-1984, the Soviet campaign involved a variety of overt and clandestine tactics to disrupt and discredit the Conference, including propaganda, media placements, rumors, interference with organizers' efforts, and pressure and incentives to discourage potential attendees. The Soviet campaign created suspicion among a number of youth groups and directly or indirectly discouraged the participation of such governments as Egypt, Indonesia, and Senegal. Nonetheless, the Soviets did not achieve their maximum objective of limiting conference attendance to a small number of conservative and pro-US groups: the 1,100 attendees from almost 100 countries exceeded the organizers' original expectations. [redacted]

The intensity of the Soviet campaign against the Jamaica International Youth Conference demonstrates Moscow's strong concern for maintaining control of international youth organizations. We believe that the Soviet Union will use similar tactics to counter any future Western actions to create a viable non-Communist international youth movement. Moscow's ability to conduct a systematic, sophisticated, global campaign against this single event also provides some indication of the level of resources the Soviets will commit to long-term issues having greater priority, such as arms control and the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). [redacted]

This memorandum was prepared by [redacted]
[redacted] Office of Global Issues. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Foreign Subversion and Instability Center, [redacted]

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Soviet Active Measures Campaign Against the Jamaica
International Youth Conference: A Case Study [redacted]

Background

The International Youth Conference, held in Kingston, Jamaica, 6-9 April 1985, was the largest youth conference organized by non-Communist countries--attracting 1,100 attendees from almost 100 countries. The Conference plan was initiated in 1981 by Jamaica with support from the United States, FRG, Canada, and other Western governments for the stated purpose of creating a non-Communist youth forum to recognize the UN's International Youth Year; it also served to challenge Moscow's longstanding control of international youth organizations. The Soviet Union had gained control of two international youth groups--World Federation of Democratic Youth and International Union of Students--shortly after their establishment at the end of World War II and has used their members as conduits for Soviet policy. The public announcement of the Conference by the host, Prime Minister Seaga of Jamaica, in November 1983, coincided with the Soviet announcement of their twelfth world youth festival to be held in Moscow 27 July to 3 August 1985. The appearance of Conference organizers in world capitals in early 1984, and the establishment of an international Conference secretariat in July, signalled to the Soviets the seriousness of the Western challenge. [redacted]

Active Measures Campaign

By midsummer 1984 the Soviets began a systematic, worldwide campaign to disrupt and discredit the Jamaica Conference through media reporting, the use of international Communist front youth groups, and contact with pro-Communist officials. Over the next nine months, the Soviets and their supporters used a variety of active measures to disrupt the Conference, including a three-month worldwide media barrage, rumors and allegations, interference with organizers' efforts, and pressure tactics and incentives to discourage would-be attendees. They encouraged a major boycott begun by socialist youth groups and provided guidance and funds to a Jamaican youth group which conducted a demonstration in Kingston during the Conference. [redacted]

The targets of the campaign included the Conference coordinators, the Conference agenda, and almost all potential attendees. The most persistent themes the Soviets used to encourage suspicion and discourage participation were allegations of:

o US domination of the forum;

o [redacted]

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- [REDACTED]
- o the conservative and undemocratic nature of the Conference organization. [REDACTED]

Media Campaign

The Soviet media campaign was intense, reflecting the priority they placed on this issue. Following Soviet propaganda techniques, the Soviets would originate a radio or press report and pass it to foreign media for local use; the local reports would then be used by pro-Communist media in other countries as "reliable" sources. For example:

- o In order to exploit cultural and political fears, West African and Moroccan newspapers carried an inaccurate Moscow report that the Conference coordinator for Israel was also responsible for all Middle Eastern countries.
- o Over a several-month period, news articles appearing in a number of countries progressively exaggerated the amount of US financial support to the Conference--from US\$1 million to US\$60 million--the figure growing as the Conference approached. [REDACTED]

Soviet media treatment indicates concern almost a year in advance of the Conference; their efforts, however, became particularly intense in the last three months before the Conference in order to produce the maximum disruptive effort. The earliest anti-Conference radio attacks began in the summer of 1984, but the global campaign started in mid-January 1985 with two or three reports broadcast weekly through the end of February. From the beginning of March through the end of the Conference on 9 April, Moscow transmitted attacks daily to regional and global audiences. In the course of the radio campaign, the Soviet message was carried in 28 languages worldwide. Havana elaborated on major themes regionally in Spanish and English, and Luanda made several broadcasts, based on Moscow reports, in Portuguese. [REDACTED]

Concurrent with the accelerated radio campaign, the Soviet youth organization, Komsomol, took the lead in the press campaign, on 6 March, with a long, highly critical feature article in Komsomolskaya Pravda. Inflammatory remarks, tailored for local readers, appeared almost immediately afterwards in the Accra, Ghana, Echo (a conduit for Soviet-supplied material), and subsequently in Moroccan and Finnish newspapers. Reuters News Service transmitted the article to the Caribbean News Agency for regional publication. The article was also broadcast by Moscow radio to audiences in Europe and China. [REDACTED]



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As a reflection of their thoroughness in attempting to discredit the Conference, the Soviet media campaign continues as a prelude to the Moscow Youth Festival that will begin 27 July. Articles describing the Conference as a "complete flop" appeared in Pravda and in most East European newspapers immediately after the Conference, and subsequently in Latin American, Indian, and Moroccan periodicals. In late May, President Forbes Burnham described the Conference as a "fiasco" during a speech to a youth festival group in Georgetown, Guyana. [redacted]

Rumors and Allegations

Because of their frequency, widespread appearance, and common themes, we believe the anti-Conference rumors and allegations that began in late 1984 were probably the work of the Soviets. Few rumors could be traced to a source. However, in late March [redacted] the Soviets expressed their concern to the Jamaican charge in Moscow that Jamaica was not a safe place for visitors (i.e., crime-ridden). This allegation was subsequently repeated by a number of sources worldwide. A Conference coordinator traveling through Africa learned that Soviet representatives for the Moscow Festival had informed a number of African officials that the Jamaicans did not intend to invite their governments or youth groups to the Jamaica Conference. Other rumors circulated that:

- o the Conference would be cancelled or postponed (Austria);
- o Reverend Moon's church was financing the Conference (Uruguay);
- o [redacted]
- o the Conference did not have a UN endorsement (Barbados). [redacted]

The most imaginative rumor was circulated by means of a flyer of unknown origin handed out in France to French delegates en route to the Conference. The flyer, from a non-existent "Moral Majority, German Section," warned of an AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) epidemic in Jamaica, Haiti, and the United States. [redacted]

[redacted] the spread of rumors played on the suspicions of would-be participants in, for example, Norway, Barbados, and the Netherlands, and created some uncertainty among youth groups. We believe their effect on actual participation, however, was probably negligible. [redacted]

"Dirty Tricks"

We believe the Soviets were responsible for a variety of "dirty tricks" that interfered with the Conference coordination

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and organization. The most significant efforts were accomplished by Communists or Communist sympathizers in Colombia, Finland, and Italy who, [redacted], blocked correspondence and interfered with attempts by Conference organizers to attract or invite the participation of youth groups. [redacted]

o [redacted]

o [redacted]

Pressure Tactics

Although it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of Soviet pressure tactics, we believe that direct Soviet contact with government officials and youth groups was a major factor in discouraging participation at the Jamaica Conference. [redacted]

- o Syria, Libya, and Algeria attempted unsuccessfully to convince Morocco not to send delegates.

o [redacted]

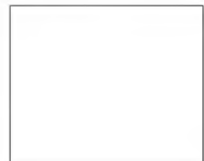
o [redacted]

- o [redacted] Indonesia withdrew from Conference participation at the last minute, possibly because the government feared that its nonaligned status would be jeopardized in a pro-US forum.

- o Senegal, an early supporter, abruptly withdrew its delegation for unknown reasons shortly before the Conference. Senegal is sending a large delegation to the Moscow Festival.

- o The UNESCO Director of Youth Affairs reported that he attended despite considerable pressure from the Soviet delegation to UNESCO.

o [redacted]



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[redacted]
[redacted]

The Soviet campaign put pressure on the Jamaica Conference organizers to work harder and spend more money to attract attendees. As a consequence of the intensified response of the Jamaica Conference organizers, the Soviets were in turn forced to make the Moscow Festival a more attractive alternative to Jamaica by providing more transportation and expanding their subsidies to pick up the bill for most, if not all, of the costs for thousands of attendees. [redacted] media reports on the progress of the Moscow Youth Festival suggest that the Soviets have also recently increased the number of cultural events for attendees. [redacted]

Capitalizing on Local and International Opposition

During their campaign the Soviets were able to take advantage of local and international non-Communist opposition to the Jamaica Conference. The opposition Jamaican People's National Party Youth Organization (PNPYO) enlisted the support of the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY), the youth arm of the Socialist International, in their efforts to stop the Conference.

- o [redacted] in mid-1984 the leadership of the IUSY began a critical inquiry into the operation of the Conference, its source of funding, and the extent of US involvement.
- o In October 1984 the IUSY Latin American regional members agreed to participate in the Moscow Festival and avoid the Jamaica Conference. By March 1985 all IUSY member groups agreed to boycott the Conference.
- o The IUSY provided funds for PNPYO representatives to travel to Europe and Africa to rally support for an international boycott.

The Soviets, [redacted] also provided funds to the PNPYO. Although there is no evidence of a cooperative effort between the Soviets and the IUSY, we suspect that there may have been collusion, beginning in mid-1984, because of parallel activities to discredit the Conference, similarities in the derogatory language used to attack the Conference, and the funding of PNPYO activities by both the Soviets and IUSY. [redacted]

Despite its planning and the vocal backing of Jamaican leftist parties, the PNPYO was unable to muster enough support locally to disrupt the Conference: it did little more than make media protests, circulate anti-Conference and anti-government flyers, and cause a small disturbance on opening day. The Soviets did, however, use the PNPYO's small clash with security

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forces during their protest to bolster claims that the Conference was undemocratic and unpopular. [REDACTED]

Implications

We believe the Soviets had hoped to discourage participation of all youth groups except the most conservative and pro-US in order to demonstrate the "reactionary" nature and US domination of the forum, restrict the attendance of dissidents from Communist-dominated countries, and demonstrate solidarity with the Soviet Union through a worldwide boycott. Conference organizers originally anticipated 700-800 delegates from 80 countries, an expectation that was surpassed by the final tally of 1,100 attendees from 85 countries, including a number of attendees from Communist-dominated countries. In view of the greater than anticipated attendance of delegates representing the spectrum of non-Communist political interests, and an open and active forum, the Soviets did not achieve their maximum goals. [REDACTED]

The Soviets, however, conducted a well-orchestrated worldwide operation that:

- o fostered suspicion and influenced a number of governments and youth groups;
- o coalesced a large body of socialist, pro-Communist and anti-US groups in opposition to the Conference;
- o provided a positive background for Moscow's own youth conference;
- o created a number of annoying distractions for the Conference organizers; and
- o employed a wide range of resources to attack systematically the United States. [REDACTED]

The level of activity directed against the Jamaica Conference clearly demonstrates the importance Moscow places on its control of the international youth movement. Although the public Soviet campaign to discredit the International Youth Conference temporarily subsided, it is intensifying again as the Moscow Festival approaches. Among the issues to be presented to the estimated 20,000 delegates at the Moscow Youth Festival--such as US intervention in Central America and the arms race--we believe the Soviets will stress the "failure" of the United States and the Conference to create a division within the international youth movement. In our view, the Soviet ability to mount such a systematic worldwide campaign against a single event such as the Jamaica Youth Conference provides some indication of the level of resources they are able to commit to long-term issues having even greater priority, such as arms control and the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). [REDACTED]

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